

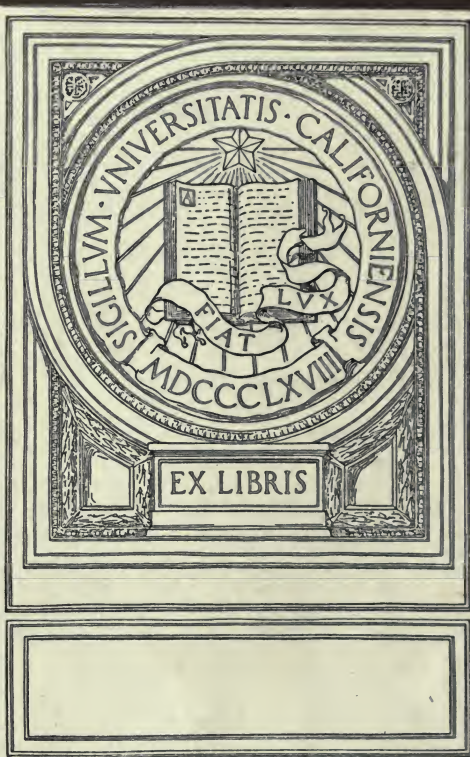
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Manual
— of —
Parliamentary
Usage

— Compiled by —
Annie Little Barry
Parliamentarian California
Federation of Women's Clubs



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PARLIAMENTARY USAGE.

It is becoming a necessity for women who are interested in topics of the day to have a knowledge of parliamentary usage. It matters not whether this interest be in religious movements, civics, politics, reforms or literary organizations.

A knowledge of parliamentary usage gives one a reasonable confidence when taking part in the active work of any organized body and assists one to prepare for public service, not in the spirit of exhibition, but of helpfulness.

This manual has been compiled with the hope that it may be a help to those who believe in doing things in the right way. It has been arranged as simply as possible for the busy women of California.

DEFINITIONS.

Parliamentary Law: Law governing deliberative bodies.

Parliamentary Usage: Rules governing deliberative bodies in the conduct of business; doing things decently and in order; public courtesy.

Session: Space of time between the first meeting and time of adjournment.

Meeting: Time of assembling to an adjournment.

Constitution: A written instrument embodying the fundamental laws of a nation, state, or society.

By-Laws: Rules relating to detail.

Standing Rules: Rules that are binding until they are rescinded or modified.

Majority Vote: One, or more, than half.

Plurality Vote: The largest number of two, or more.

To Commit: Referring to a committee.

Re-commit: To refer subject back to committee.

Quorum: The number necessary to transact business; should be stated in By-Laws.

Seriatim: To consider, item by item, or section by section.

Viva Voce: With the voice.

Previous Question: A technical name for motion to cut off debate.

Sine Die: Without an appointed day.

SUGGESTIONS.

Do not say, I make a motion, I move you Madam President, or I suggest a motion; say, I move.

Do not say, I move that this committee adjourn; say, I move that this committee arise.

Do not move to receive a report after it has been read; say, I move to accept or adopt.

Do not move to lay a question on the table if you wish to postpone it.

Do not call "question, question" if you wish to cut off debate; move the previous question.

Do not forget to vote.

Do not be afraid to vote according to your honest convictions.

Do not feel obliged to vote in the affirmative; the negative vote will be called for.

Do not make negative motions.

Do not carry on a conversation with another member when debating a question. Address the chair if you wish to ask a question of a member.

Do not bring personal matters to your organization and expect to have them settled.

Do not forget to abide by the majority.

Do not forget that parliamentary law is to facilitate business, not to obstruct it.

Parliamentary law should be your servant, not your master.

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS.

A privileged motion is one that takes precedence.

To fix the time to adjourn.

To adjourn.

Questions of privilege.

Orders of the day.

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS.

Incidental Motions grow out of other motions, and must be disposed of before the motion which gave rise to them. They yield to all privileged motions.

Appeals.

Objection to considering the question.

The reading of papers.

Withdrawal of motions.

Suspension of rules.

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS.

Subsidiary Motions are motions that aid in the disposition of main questions, and must be acted upon before main questions. They yield to Privileged and Incidental Motions.

To lay on the table.

The previous question.

To postpone to a certain day.

To commit (or re-commit).

To amend.

To postpone indefinitely.

PRINCIPAL MOTION.

A Principal Motion is a motion that introduces business to the house for consideration. It requires a second, and may be demanded in writing. One who wishes to make a motion must rise, address chairman, and wait to be recognized. To second a motion it is not necessary to rise.

MOTIONS REQUIRING TWO-THIRDS VOTE.

Amend rules.
The previous question.
Extend limit of debate.
Limit time of debate.
To make a special order.
Objection to consideration of question.
To suspend rules.

MOTIONS THAT CANNOT BE AMENDED.

To adjourn (when unqualified).
For orders of the day.
Appeals.
Objection to consideration of question.
Withdrawal of a motion.
Suspension of rules.
Lay on the table.
Previous question.
Amendment to amendment.
Postpone indefinitely.
To reconsider.

UNDEBATABLE QUESTIONS.

To fix the time to which to adjourn. (If made when another question is before the house).
To adjourn (when unqualified).
Orders of the day.
To lay on the table or take from the table.
The previous question.
Objection to consideration of a question.
Withdrawing a motion.
Suspend rules.
Reconsider an undebatable motion.
Extend the limit of debate.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

The duties of officers should be defined in the Constitution and By-Laws.

The qualifications of officers may be a matter of opinion.

Suggestions:

The President should have poise, be impartial in rulings, should protect minorities.

The Vice-President should be able to fill the President's chair if necessary.

The Recording Secretary should be one who has a willingness to do much detail work, and should always remember that no matter how much knowledge she may possess in regard to the work, she is the Secretary only—not the President.

The Corresponding Secretary should promptly and conscientiously do the correspondence of her organization.

The Treasurer should be exact and have business qualifications.

The Auditor should be willing and competent to examine accounts carefully.

AMENDMENTS.

Subsidiary motion; debatable; majority vote.

Require to be seconded.

Roberts recognizes five ways of amending a motion: By adding or inserting, by striking out and inserting, by substitution, and by dividing the question.

Amendments may be hostile to the question but must be germane.

Only two amendments may be pending at one time—an amendment and an amendment to an amendment.

One who makes a motion may amend his own motion.

A question with two amendments vote first on the amendment to the amendment; if this carries, on the amendment as amended; if this carries, on original motion as amended.

If the second amendment carries and the first amendment loses, only the original motion is left; if the second amendment loses and the first amendment carries, the question with the first amendment remains.

Other amendments may be made when one or both are disposed of.

An amendment is not in order after previous question, postpone, or lay on the table has been ordered.

An amendment when laid on the table, postponed or committed, carries with it the main motion (except a motion to amend minutes does not carry minutes with it.)

An amendment is higher in rank only than the question which it proposes to amend; it yields to any privileged, incidental or subsidiary motion, except to indefinitely postpone.

LAY ON THE TABLE.

Subsidiary motion; undebatable; majority vote.

Requires to be seconded.

Cannot be amended.

Cannot have a secondary motion applied to it.

Removes the subject from consideration till the assembly votes to take from the table.

Carries with it everything pertaining to the subject except when applied to appeals, to reconsider, and amending minutes.

Affirmative vote cannot be reconsidered.

Higher in rank than all other subsidiary motions.

Yields to any privileged or incidental question.

Motion to take from the table undebatable.

TO RECONSIDER.

Principal motion; debatable; majority vote.

Requires to be seconded.

Brings the question before the house again.

Is debatable if the question it proposes to reconsider is debatable.

A motion to reconsider must be made by one who voted on the prevailing side (the prevailing side is not necessarily the affirmative), and must be made at the same meeting or the one following that on which the motion was introduced. It may be made even when another has the floor but cannot be acted upon at that time.

It suspends all action on the original motion.

A question may be reconsidered but once, and may not be amended.

To adjourn, to suspend the rules, an affirmative vote, to lay on the table, a vote by ballot, and elections cannot be reconsidered.

In reconsidering a question with amendment, reconsider first the vote on the original question, then on the amendment.

Minutes may be corrected any number of times without a reconsideration.

A vote that has resulted in action that cannot be reversed cannot be reconsidered.

A motion to reconsider a vote on a subsidiary motion is higher in rank than the main question. It yields to privileged questions except for the orders of the day and incidental questions.

PREVIOUS QUESTION.

Subsidiary motion; undebatable; two-thirds vote.

Requires to be seconded.

Cuts off amendments and debate and forces vote.

Cannot be applied to undebatable questions.

Cannot be committed, postponed or amended.
Maker of motion may move previous question.
Applies to the whole question, unless otherwise specified.

If intended to apply only to amendment it must be so stated.

Higher in rank than debatable questions.

Yields to the motion to lay on the table and to incidental questions.

TO POSTPONE DEFINITELY.

Subsidiary motion; debatable; majority vote.

Requires to be seconded.

May be amended by altering time.

Allows of limited debate. The debate must not be on the merits of the question, but on the postponement.

Higher in rank than commit or amend.

Yields to any privileged or incidental question and to the motion to lay on the table.

TO INDEFINITELY POSTPONE.

Subsidiary motion; debatable; majority vote.

Requires to be seconded.

Removes the question before the assembly.

Higher in rank than principal motion only.

Yields to any privileged, incidental or subsidiary motion, except to amend.

Roberts states that an affirmative vote on this question is identical with a negative vote on the main question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Privileged motion; undebatable; two-thirds vote required to change order.

Requires no second.

Is in order when another has the floor.

Cannot be amended.

Higher in rank than everything except to fix the time to which to adjourn, to adjourn, questions of privilege, and to reconsider.

TO COMMIT OR RE-COMMIT.

Subsidiary motion; debatable; majority vote.

Requires to be seconded.

Can be amended by altering the committee or giving instructions.

Higher in rank than to amend or indefinitely postpone, and yields to any privileged or incidental question, to lay on the table, previous question, and to postpone to a certain day.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES.

(Accepting or Adopting Reports.)

Accepting a report accepts all that it reports.

It is often wiser to move that a report be considered.

Reports may be amended.

Roberts states that when a report is only for the information of the assembly it is not necessary to take any action, and that it is an error to move that a committee which has done its work be discharged, for when a committee has done its work and its report has been received it has ceased to exist.

A minority report of a committee may be read but it has no standing without it is substituted for the report of the majority.

Sub-committees may be appointed by committees (except by committee of the whole), they to report to the committee which created them.

In committee of the whole the presiding officer calls another member to the chair. The only motions then in order are to amend, accept or adopt, and that the committee rise and report.

TO ADJOURN.

Privileged motion; undebatable; majority vote.

Cannot be amended.

Cannot be laid on table.

If lost, cannot be repeated without intervening business.

May be made to a certain time or sine die.

In order except when a member has the floor.

Higher in rank than any other motion except to fix the time to which to adjourn. This motion may be considered while motion to adjourn is pending.

MISCELLANEOUS.

To expunge from minutes requires a unanimous vote.

A motion to rescind may be made regardless of the time that has elapsed.

If motion is made that the Secretary cast the ballot and there be one opposing vote it prohibits the ballot being cast in this way.

A President is not ex-officio of committees without it is so stated in Constitution or By-Laws.

Constitution and By-Laws may not be suspended without they provide for their own suspension.

Standing rules may be suspended by a two-thirds vote.

The maker of a motion may vote against her own motion, but she may not speak against it.

A motion may be withdrawn before it is stated by the chair; afterward, if there be no objection.

Change of Vote: A member may change her vote (when not by ballot), before the decision has been announced by the chair.

The maker of a motion may claim the right to close the debate even though the previous question has been ordered.

The President votes in case of tie, and when vote is by ballot.

The gavel should be used to call meeting to order, and to preserve order. Do not abuse the use of the gavel.

Fraternal bodies are subject first to their Ritual and By-Laws.

A law governing any body takes precedence of Parliamentary law.

Elections may not be reconsidered but may be declared illegal if such is the case and a second election ordered.

Nominations for office do not require a second, but it is a courtesy.

A Recording Secretary should always record a motion that is lost the same as one that is carried. She should always record the name of the one who makes the motion. It is not necessary to record the name of the one who seconds the motion unless the minutes are to be published.

Never accept a Treasurer's report till the Auditor's report has been accepted. If your Treasurer reports monthly and your Auditor reports less frequently, move to refer your Treasurer's report to your Auditor.

The report of the Treasurer is for the information of members. Details are not easily followed, therefore furnish details to Auditor, not to society without they are requested.



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